

which duly did a few days later. There are a few previous records from the county for this species, but this is a new locality (B. R. Baker, pers.comm). Remarkably, it is not known from Windsor Forest and Great Park, although occurs close by at Silwood Park.

There is a concentration of large old field oaks immediately to the north-west of Donnington Castle (SU 460693) and these were also inspected for insects. The largest tree held a population of the dermestid beetle *Ctesias serra* (F.) beneath loose bark on its trunk, and a single specimen of the scarce anobiid beetle *Dorcatoma chrysomelina* Sturm was found crawling over cuboidal red-rot exposed in the heartwood of another overmature tree alongside Castle Wood. These two species are of restricted occurrence nationally due to their requirement for large old trees, and the *Dorcatoma* is otherwise only known in the county from Windsor. Fallen oak branches contained the beetles *Scolytus intricatus* (Ratz.) and *Cylindrinotus laevioctostriatus* (Goeze) and the spider *Nuctenea umbratica* (Clerck).

My thanks to J. M. Chalmers-Hunt and B. R. Baker for information about the moth, and to A. P. Foster for confirming its identity.—K. N. A. Alexander, 14 Partridge Way, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 1BQ.

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*Ephemera lineata* Eaton (Ephemeroptera: Ephemeridae) at Reading, Berkshire.—In August 1953 when operating a makeshift light trap at Tilehurst, just to the west of Reading, I trapped two large ephemerids and, thinking August rather late to see mayflies, both were kept for future reference. The insects were added to the meagre collection of Ephemeroptera at Reading Museum and given no further thought until 1958. Early that year, a keen young freshwater biologist, G. Harrison, a pupil at Leighton Park School, came to us and asked to see the Ephemeroptera collection. The drawer had an immediate effect upon our visitor who could not restrain himself from executing several jumps of delight! It appeared that the Tilehurst specimens were *Ephemera lineata* Eaton, known previously from the River Thames near Reading, Laleham, Teddington and Weybridge, but not recorded since 1901. Kimmins's FBA key (1954) added 'scarce in collections'. We decided to try and discover *lineata* nymphs and on 29.v hired a boat from the Tilehurst stretch of the Thames and, with the aid of a grab borrowed from Reading University, sampled the silty shoals for most of the afternoon. This proved totally unsuccessful. On 31.vii.1958 by arrangement with the then Thames Conservancy, a plug-in was obtained at Mapledurham Lock, about three miles upstream from Reading, and a Robinson trap operated there for three nights. This was again unsuccessful as far as *E. lineata* was concerned. Soon afterwards Harrison went off to Cambridge but maintained his interest in Ephemeroptera and I learned later that he had discovered *E. lineata* somewhere near his parents' home on the River Wye. This is reflected by Macan's comment in his 1961 key to ephemerid nymphs when referring to *E. lineata*: 'Rare. R. Wye and R. Thames'. By 1974 I had moved to my present address at Caversham Heights, less than half a mile north of the Thames, and on the humid night of 9.vii.1981 (minimum temperature 16 degrees centigrade) was delighted to trap a further specimen. Another was trapped on 13.vii.1987. My wife Heather noted another on our window on 23.vii.1991 and on 11.viii.1991, as we were walking home over Caversham Bridge just before midnight we noted many sub-imagines (50 plus) sitting nearby on a brightly lit shop window. Most recently, 12.vii.1994 another very humid night, a similarly large number of *E. lineata*, duns and spinners, were attracted to a mercury vapour lit sheet operated on our back lawn.

I do not know whether one can read into this series of events an improved water quality of the River Thames at Reading, but can say with certainty that there has been a marked rise in the status of *E. lineata* there.—B. R. Baker, 25 Matlock Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire RG4 7BP.

#### REFERENCES

- Kimmins, D. E. 1954. *A revised key to the adults of British Ephemeroptera*. FBA Scientific Publication No. 15.  
 Macan, T. T. 1961. *A key to the nymphs of British Ephemeroptera*. FBA Scientific Publication No. 20.

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***Armadillidium pictum* Brandt (Isopoda: Armadillidiidae) new to Gloucestershire.**—The finding of a number of pill woodlice (*Armadillidium* sp.) which appeared to be the Red Data Book *A. pictum* was mentioned in the field meeting report for Symonds Yat and Wye Gorge, 13 September 1992 (Alexander, 1993). Their identity has now been confirmed by David Bilton.

This pretty woodlouse is otherwise known from two distinct areas of the British Isles: north-west England (north Lancashire, Westmorland, mid-west Yorkshire) and central Wales (Breconshire and Radnorshire). The Gloucestershire specimens were found beneath loose bark on a fallen dead branch, probably beech, above The Slaughter. The branch was tangled up amongst other foliage, etc, and the woodlice were actually found at about 1 m above ground level. This situation is very similar to that described for one of the Welsh localities and in mainland Europe, and unlike the rocky terrain favoured by the species in the north-west (Bratton, 1991; Harding & Sutton, 1985).—K. N. A. Alexander, 14 Partridge Way, Cirencester, Glos. GL7 1BQ.

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- Alexander, K. N. A. 1993. BENHS Field Meeting: Symonds Yat and Wye Gorge, 13 September 1992. *Br. J. Ent. Nat. Hist.* 6: 87.  
 Bratton, J. 1991. *Armadillidium pictum* In: Bratton, J. (Ed.). *British red data books: 3. Invertebrates other than insects*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, pp. 113–114.  
 Harding, P. T. & Sutton, S. L. 1985. *Woodlice in Britain and Ireland: distribution and habitat*. Institute of Terrestrial Ecology, Huntingdon.

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### BOOK REVIEWS

**Rarity**, by K. J. Gaston. *Population and community biology series 13*. Chapman & Hall, London, 1994, 205 pages, £17.99, hardback.—The *Population and community biology series* aims to explore many facets of population biology and the processes that determine the structure and dynamics of communities. This volume aims to review and provide a synthesis of the diverse topic of rarity. As stated on the back cover of this book 'Population and community biology [books] have been based largely on studies of abundant and widespread species. Most species are neither.' Despite this, the volume, which has obviously been well-researched, has been able to draw on a large selection of published references.

The topic is covered by eight chapters. The first of these examines what is meant by rarity, including extracts of definitions from the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (1983), criteria that have been utilized by a range of studies to delineate rare species,